



Press Release

Lake County Sheriff's Office
www.sheriffdunlap.org

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PRESS RELEASE
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Holiday Travel Safety

The Orange County Sheriff's Office in Florida recently passed along a great resource for the upcoming holiday travel week. We are passing along these recommendations for holiday safety to our communities, they are great thoughts to consider as we approach the Holiday Season....

Precautions and Recommendations:

- **Always report any suspicious activity.** Call your local police agency on the non-emergency line for non-emergency situations or 9-1-1 for any emergency. Both should be operational 24/7.
- **Always lock your vehicle and take all valuables with you.** These items may include GPS, cell phone, loose change, and compact discs to name a few.
- **Set your vehicle alarm if you have one.** In addition to locking your vehicle doors, make sure if your vehicle has a latch to open a trunk or cargo area, and if it is equipped with a lock feature; that you use it.
- **Do not** announce on your email auto response that you are on vacation with the dates you are leaving or returning. This includes both work and personal emails. If you must leave an auto response reply it should contain as little information as possible. **Example:** *I am currently away and periodically checking my emails. If you need an immediate response, please contact Jane Doe at 555-555-5555.*
- **Do not** announce to the whole community that you will be gone on vacation. This would include by word of mouth, voice mail and social networking sites (Facebook, My Space, Twitter, etc). Only let a few select and trusted friends or family members know so they can check your home for you.
- **Do not** update your travel plans on social networking sites. **Example:** *We are having a blast in the islands... we go snorkeling tomorrow. Wishing you were here. See you in two weeks.*
- Turn down the ringer on your phone so it can't be heard from the outside.
- Periodically retrieve your home messages so your voice mail does not get full. This could be another indicator you are not home.
- Complete a maintenance check of your alarm system prior to your departure. Make sure the alarm company has updated contact information to include how to reach you as well as a trusted friend or relative in the area.
- Contact your local police department and request they provide house checks while you are away. In most communities this is a **free** service.

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- Make arrangements to have someone plow or shovel your driveway while you are away. Do not announce to them you are leaving. Make sure your Snow removal, lawn and pool services are paid and up to date. This will prevent them from leaving a bill at your front door or mailbox.
- Stop all deliveries to include parcel packages and newspaper delivery

Have a trusted relative, friend or neighbor do the following:

1. Park a spare vehicle in your driveway while you are away.
2. The first preference is to have your mail stopped. The second option is to have a friend/neighbor check and retrieve your mail. This includes a community mailbox.
3. Place trash in front of your home on trash day and then remove the receptacle.
4. Periodic walks and inspections around your home.
5. Pick up any newspaper deliveries. (The preference is to have it stopped)
6. Check the front door for unsolicited fliers, bills (pool, lawn) and parcel packages left at your front door. Have them remove these items.
 - Place interior/outdoor lights, televisions and radios on timers. Make sure your lights are timed for appropriate hours.
 - Unplug your garage door opener and lock the rails from the inside.
 - Inspect your home prior to departure and make sure all windows and doors are locked and secure. This should also include storage areas.
 - Make sure you secure outdoor items such as bicycles, toys, outdoor grill, etc.
 - Unplug all appliances to include TV, stereos, computers, toasters, and microwave ovens to prevent damage during electrical storms.
 - Make sure the last person out of the house locks the door. Then make a check of the outside to make sure everything is secure.

These tips **are not** all inclusive.

Safe Traveler Program: If you are traveling outside of the country we recommend you visit <http://travel.state.gov/>. Please check for travel advisory or warnings for that specific country or region you will visit on your vacation. It will provide information on the status of that area.

We also **highly** recommend that you register your visit abroad with the nearest consulate or embassy at: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. The consulate or embassy can get a hold of you in an emergency, assist you if you are injured or the victim of a crime or alert you to changes in the country or area status.

Avoid those delays and that confusion at the airport. **Know Before You Go!** Prior to air travel please visit: <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/>

Make sure you view the top 10 traveler tips from DHLS prior to travel.
http://www.cbp.gov/linkhandler/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/top_10_trvler_tps.ctt/top_10_trvler_tps.pdf

Other things to consider while traveling are:

1. Always let a trusted family member know your travel plans. This would include departure and arrival times whether you travel by car, plane or any other form. If your plans change or get delayed, **let someone know.**
2. Please remember that laws vary from state to state and from country to country. Please be cautious as to your behavior especially when traveling to another country.
3. Also remember that what may be customary to you may be an insult in another country or culture. Please take the time to learn about the culture and area you will visit.
4. Always check with your health insurance to see if you are covered in the country you are visiting. You may need to consider some type of travel insurance.
5. Always check with your auto insurance carrier to see if you are covered in another state or country for auto accidents and what insurance coverage may or may not be available. You may need to consider some type of additional insurance. Also check with your credit card provider for alternatives on insurance.
6. Always check to see if needed prescriptions are available. **Be aware** that other travel destinations may use a different measuring system. Check with your physician on alternatives. **WARNING:** The use of substitute medication in another country that is not recognized by the FDA or other medical organizations may cause adverse effects to include death. Always check with your physician.
7. Be aware that some medications prescribed in the U.S. may not be legal in other countries and some medications prescribed in other countries may not be legal or recognized in the U.S.
8. Let's not forget our furry little friends. Please make the proper arrangements with your pets if they are left behind while you travel. If you would like to travel with your pet, you can learn more about Travel Guide For Pets, Travel Tips For Pets & Taking Your Pet To a Foreign Country by visiting the United States Department of Agriculture at:
http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=PETS&parentnav=TRAVEL_RECREATION&navtype=RT
9. Avoid "Bill Shock." Always check with your cell phone provider to see what coverage if any may be received in another state or country and what **charges may apply.** This would include text messaging, Internet use, etc. Some options may include a phone card, pre-paid cell phone, or a temporary rental at your arrival destination. If you truly want to stay or need to be in touch many companies offer satellite or cell phones that may be rented.
10. Always check with your credit card company or bank to make sure your card will work in a foreign country. Refrain from using the debit option in another country.
11. When making a purchase out of state or out of country, always check with the retailer on returns, refunds or exchanges. It is best to shop at a recognized

- national or international chain or at a business that has a clear policy on returns, refunds or exchanges.
12. Unsolicited Fliers at your hotel: A major hotel chain will never leave any unsolicited material under your room door without the official hotel name or logo. Many unsolicited material will usually be a food product not endorsed by the hotel. Many times unsolicited material left under your room door is a scam. For recommendations on dining in the area you visit, always check with the front desk or concierge.

Upon Arrival from your trip:

1. *If you arrive early please notify your local law enforcement agency to cancel your house check. If you anticipate a longer trip or delay, call to extend your house check.*
2. *Resume your mail, subscription and deliveries.*
3. *Inspect your home both interior and exterior. Report any criminal acts to your law enforcement agency.*
4. *Plug your garage door device in. **Remember to remove the lock from the rail. Failure to do so may result in damage to the device and rails.***
5. *Immediately inspect all billing statements upon arrival from your bank or credit card company. Report any suspicious activity immediately to your local law enforcement agency and bank.*
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